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Possessive Verbs in Modern Icelandic

現代アイスランド語の所有の動詞

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Abstract

This paper deals with three possessive verbs in Modern Icelandic: *eiga* 'own', *hafa* 'have' and *vera með* 'be with'. Semantic relations between the possessor and the possessee as well as modes of possession indicated by the verbs are examined, taking verb usage based on a possessee type classification into consideration.

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1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to present a precise description of three verbs in Modern Icelandic¹ which are the most prominent among verbs denoting possessive relation: *eiga* ‘own’, *hafa* ‘have’ and *vera með* ‘be with’.² Sentences involving any one of these verbs contain two nominals which I label ‘possessor’ and ‘possessee’, and all three possessive verbs take the following case frame:

- (1) NOM (possessor) + verb + ACC (possessee)³

The verbs agree with the nominative possessor noun/pronoun in person and number. The following are sample sentences for each verb:

- (2) a. *Jón á margar bækur.*
 John:NOM owns:3sg many books:ACC
 ‘John has many books.’
 (i.e. the books are in John’s possession or he is the author)
- b. *Jón hefur margar bækur.*
 John:NOM has:3sg many books:ACC
 ‘John has many books.’ (i.e. John keeps the books somewhere)
- c. *Jón er með margar bækur.*
 John:NOM is:3sg with many books:ACC
 ‘John has many books.’ (i.e. John has the books close at hand)

In (2), all three verbs are possible for the same possessor and possessee, but their implications are different. For some possessee types, only one or two are acceptable. Verb selection depends largely on the possessee type and the mode of possession the speaker intends to express. What follows is an attempt at a close description of verb usage according to a classification of possessee types.

¹ Icelandic is one of the North Germanic languages. Four morphological cases are distinguished: nominative, accusative, dative and genitive. In the glosses under the Icelandic examples, nouns with the suffixed definite article (“definite forms”) are indicated by the notation ‘Def’. There are no indefinite articles in Icelandic. It is known that definiteness is relevant to text configurations involving verbs of possession (for examples from English and German, see Seiler (1983: 61)), but this is not fully discussed in this paper. For general descriptions of the language, see Einarsson (1945) and Kress (1982).

² I consider *vera með* ‘be with’ to be a phrasal verb.

³ In sentences involving *vera með* ‘be with’, the possessee can appear in the dative case under certain conditions. This will be discussed later in 4.5.

It should be noted that the frequency of *eiga* ‘own’ and *vera með* ‘be with’ is much higher than might be expected from the English glosses, and they can easily be translated into English with the verb ‘have’ in most cases.

In this article, I deal mainly with sentences involving a human possessor and a concrete noun possessee. This is because, on the one hand, that seems to be the prototypical situation in possessive expressions; on the other, simply because I still have not found a generalization for cases where a non-human possessor and/or an abstract noun possessee appear. Those cases are left for further research.

Note that *eiga* ‘own’, *hafa* ‘have’ and *vera* ‘be’ are also used to construct compound verbal expressions: e.g. *hafa* ‘have’ and *vera* ‘be’ construct perfect tenses when combined with the past participle of a verb, and *eiga* ‘own’ denotes obligation when it occurs in the construction “*eiga* ‘own’ + *að* ‘to’ + infinitive” (cf. English ‘have to’). In this paper, however, I restrict myself to dealing with expressions generally considered to be “possessive”.

2. Previous studies

Friðjónsson (1978) and Duppler and van Nahl (1994), both of which are course books for learners of Modern Icelandic, describe contrastive usage of the three verbs. Duppler and van Nahl (1994: 102) seem to have followed, on the whole, Friðjónsson (1978: 70), although the possessed items mentioned there are different from Friðjónsson’s. Friðjónsson (1978: 70) contains the following statement:

“The Icelandic verbs *hafa* [‘have’]⁴, *eiga* [‘own’] and *vera með* [‘be with’] in most cases correspond to the English verb *have*. In spite of this correspondence, the three Icelandic verbs cannot normally be interchanged.

- a) *eiga* [‘own’]: denotes ownership or social relationship.
- b) *hafa* [‘have’]: denotes a looser connection, abstract possession.
- c) *vera með* [‘be with’]: denotes an inalienable possession pertinent to parts of the body — illness etc. — or that one has something in one’s hands or pockets, with oneself etc. (leaving unspecified whether or not this object is the property of the person “having” it).⁵

Possessed items mentioned in Friðjónsson (1978: 70, 94) are as follows:⁵

⁴ Italicization and glosses in brackets are not present in the original text.

⁵ In the original text, these examples are presented in simple sentences involving a human possessor, but only the possessed items are presented here. Items mentioned in Friðjónsson (1978: 94) in connection with other possessive expressions have also been added to the list.

- a) for *eiga* 'own': *bill* 'car', *börn* 'children', *kona* 'wife', *vinur* 'friend', *kunningi* 'acquaintance', *félagi* 'companion', *frændi* 'male relative'
- b) for *hafa* 'have': *næði* 'quiet [noun]', *tími* 'time', *læknir* 'doctor', *lögfræðingur* 'lawyer', *kaup* 'salary', *atkvæði* 'vote'⁶
- c) for *vera með* 'be with': *flensa* 'flu', *kvef* 'cold [noun]', *bindi* 'tie', *gleraugu* 'glasses', *munur* 'mouth', *nef* 'nose', *enni* 'forehead'

For textbooks intended for beginning learners of the language, the above description is sufficient. However, the actual usage of the three verbs and semantic relations between the possessor and the possessee are more complicated. For example, *vera með* 'be with' can be used even when there is a considerable amount of distance between the possessor and the possessee.

The preposition *með* 'with' can also be used together with the dative case under certain conditions, as will be discussed in 4.5. Gustavs (1982) discusses in detail the question of case selection after the preposition *með* 'with' and points out that there is parallelism between the use of the preposition *með* 'with' followed by the accusative case (including the combination with the copula *vera* 'be' in *vera með* 'be with') and sentences involving the verb *hafa* 'have' both in their historical development and in their usage in the modern language. Gustavs (1982) states that the relation expressed by *með* (+ACC) can be "transformed" from a *hafa*-sentence:

"Die Verwendung des Akkusativs bei der Präposition *með* setzt voraus, daß sich die durch *með* ausgedrückte Beziehung aus einem *hafa*-Satz transformieren läßt."

(Gustavs 1982: 121)

However, as I will show in this article, *vera með* 'be with' and *hafa* 'have' are not always semantically interchangeable. It is my opinion that there are fundamental semantic differences between the use of the preposition *með* 'with' (+ACC) and the verb *hafa* 'have', and that a sentence including *með* 'with' (+ACC) cannot be derived by simple transformation from a sentence including *hafa* 'have'. Gustavs

⁶ Friðjónsson (1978: 70) also mentions the following example:

(i) *Börn* *hafa* *hátt*.
 children:Def:NOM have noisy
 'The children are noisy.'

(*hátt* is the neuter singular NOM-ACC form of an adjective meaning 'loud, noisy')

This is an idiomatic expression involving the verb *hafa* 'have'. It is impossible to replace *hátt* with other adjectives such as *rólegt* 'calm' or *stillt* 'still'. There are even cases in which the verb *eiga* 'own' is combined with an adjective: e.g. *eiga erfitt* 'have difficulty' (cf. *erfitt* 'difficult').

(1982) reveals that the case selection of the nominals which follow the preposition *með* ‘with’ (i.e. “possessee”) depends on the semantic features of the nominals which precede the preposition (i.e. “possessor”); however, the study pays little attention to the semantic properties of the former (“possessee”).

In what follows, I deal mainly with sentences involving a human possessor and will tentatively classify possessee types and examine the meanings of each verb and possessee type combination.

3. Classification of possessee types

I tentatively classify possessee types as follows⁷: (a) “kinship, interpersonal relations and creative works” [4.1]; (b) “occupational status” [4.2]; (c) “terms pertaining to the body” [4.3]; and (d) “other possessee” [4.4].

For the group (a) “kinship, interpersonal relations and creative works”, only *eiga* ‘own’ is acceptable, and the group is divided into two subgroups according to differences of semantic relations between the possessor and the possessee: (i) “kinship and interpersonal relations” [4.1.1] and (ii) “creative works” [4.1.2].

For the group (b) “occupational status”, only *hafa* ‘have’ is fully acceptable.

For the group (c) “terms pertaining to the body”, *vera með* ‘be with’ is the most acceptable verb, and the group can be divided into three subgroups according to the acceptability of *hafa* ‘have’ and/or the factors which condition its

⁷ Tsunoda (1995) proposes what he terms the “possession cline”, based on the degree of acceptability of “possessor respect” in Japanese, which is a phenomenon involving the usage of honorifics in possessive expressions where “respect” towards the possessor is expressed grammatically as if it were directed at the possessed item itself:

“Possession Cline:

body part > inherent attribute > clothing > (kin) > pet animal > product > other possessee”

(Tsunoda 1995: 576)

Tsunoda (1995) argues that the cline represents the degree of closeness/attachedness between the possessor and the possessee and shows that the higher the possessee is on the cline, the more acceptable the use of honorifics becomes. Tsunoda (1995) also shows that the cline is manifested in other phenomena involving possession in Japanese and other languages. I am still not sure whether “possession cline” or some modification of it can also be applied to a description of possessive expressions in Icelandic, but the idea is utilized here as a basis for classifying possessee types and considering the meaning attributed by the possessive verbs to each possessee type.

acceptability: (i) “body parts” [4.3.1], (ii) “illnesses” [4.3.2] and (iii) “accessories and minor apparel” [4.3.3].

For the group (d) “other possesseees”, basically all three verbs are acceptable, and the meaning indicated by the verb *eiga* ‘own’ is “ownership” in the usual sense. The group can be further divided into two subgroups according to the factor which conditions the use of *vera með* ‘be with’: (i) “portable possesseees” [4.4.1] and (ii) “non-portable possesseees” [4.4.2].

The acceptability of each verb with each possessee type is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Acceptability of each verb to each possessee type

group	(a)		(b)	(c)			(d)	
subgroup	kin- ship	crea- tive works	occupa- tional status	body parts	ill- nesses	acces- sories	portable posses- sees	non- portable possesseees
<i>eiga</i>	+	+	—	—	—	—	+	+
<i>hafa</i>	—	—	+	(+)	(+)	—	+	+
<i>vera með</i>	—	—	(+)	+	+	+	+	(+)

Key: ‘+’ indicates ‘acceptable’, and ‘—’ indicates ‘not acceptable’. Parentheses denote that the use of the verb is conditioned or less acceptable.

4. Verb usage in terms of the classification

In the following, we will examine in more detail the usage of the three possessive verbs for each possessee type according to the above classification.

4.1. Kinship, interpersonal relations and creative works

For this group, only *eiga* ‘own’ is acceptable, and the relation between the possessor and the possessee indicated by the verb is not that of “owner” and “possession” in the usual sense of “ownership”, in contrast to “other possesseees”. The group is divided into two subgroups: (i) “kinship and interpersonal relations” and (ii) “creative works”.

4.1.1. Kinship and interpersonal relations

This group includes (a) virtually all the kinship terms and (b) terms which denote personal relations seen from the possessor’s point of view:

- (a) e.g. *afi* ‘grandfather’, *amma* ‘grandmother’, *faðir* ‘father’, *móðir* ‘mother’, *pabbi* ‘dad’, *mamma* ‘mom’, *bróðir* ‘brother’, *systir* ‘sister’, *kona* ‘wife’,

maður ‘husband’, *barn* ‘child’, *sonur* ‘son’, *dóttir* ‘daughter’, *tengdasonur* ‘son-in-law’, *tengdadóttir* ‘daughter-in-law’, *barnabarn* ‘grandchild’, *frænka* ‘collateral female relative (mostly aunt or cousin or niece)’, *frændi* ‘collateral male relative (mostly uncle or cousin or nephew)’, *foreldrar* ‘parents’, *systkini* ‘brothers and sisters’, *ffjölskylda* ‘family’, *ættingi* ‘relative’

- (b) e.g. *vinur* ‘friend’, *kunningi* ‘acquaintance’, *bekkjarbróðir* ‘male classmate’, *bekkjarsystir* ‘female classmate’, *félagi* ‘companion, colleague’, *kærasti* ‘boyfriend (fiancé)’, *kærasta* ‘girlfriend (fiancée)’, *óvinur* ‘enemy’, *ffjandmaður* ‘enemy’

The possessee normally appears in the non-definite form:

- (3) *Jón á börn.*
John:NOM owns children:ACC
‘John has children.’

In contrast to most or all of the other terms included in this group, the definite form of the word *barn* ‘child’ can be used with the verb *eiga* ‘own’:

- (4) *Jón á börnin.*
John:NOM owns children:Def:ACC
‘The children are John’s.’

The other terms in this group are hardly ever used with element(s) denoting definiteness in a sentence such as (4), which involves the verb *eiga* ‘own’. Note that the word ‘children’ in (4) denotes a category of human beings rather than kinship.

Terms denoting persons of direct ancestry such as parents and grandparents (i.e. relatives one has inherently)⁸ are normally not used with *eiga* ‘own’, unless a notation of place or some other qualifier is added:

- (5) *Jón á föður í Þýskalandi.*
John:NOM owns father:ACC in Germany:DAT
‘John’s father is in Germany.’
- (6) *Jón á strangan föður.*
John:NOM owns strict father:ACC
‘John has a strict father.’

⁸ These are “‘everyone’-type possesseees” in Tsunoda’s (1995: 617ff.) term (cf. 4.3.1).

If *hafa* ‘have’ is used for this group, kinship is not implied, and the sentence denotes that the possessor is responsible for the possessee’s being in a certain place:

- (7) *Jón hefur börn hjá sér.*
 John:NOM has children:ACC at himself:DAT
 ‘John cares for children at home.’ (*sér* is the reflexive pronoun)
- (8) *Jón hefur börnin sín á leikskóla.*
 John:NOM has children:Def:ACC his on kindergarten:DAT
 ‘John has left his children in a kindergarten.’
 (*sín* is the reflexive possessive pronoun)

The normal interpretation for (7) would be that the children are not John’s. To indicate clearly that the children are John’s, the definite form and reflexive possessive pronoun are necessary, as in (8).

Kinship is not implied by the verb *vera með* ‘be with’, either:

- (9) *Jón er með barn.*
 John:NOM is with child:ACC
 ‘John is with a child.’

It is irrelevant in sentence (9) whether the child is John’s or not. The sentence denotes that John is holding a child in his arms or leading it by the hand. The use of *vera með* ‘be with’ will be discussed further in 4.5.

4.1.2. Creative works

When the relation between the possessor and the possessee is that of a producer and a product, e.g. an author and a book, a composer and a piece of music, a painter and a painting, the relation can be expressed by *eiga* ‘own’:

- (10) *Málarinn á mörg málverk.*
 painter:Def:NOM owns many paintings:ACC
 ‘The painter’s paintings are many.’

Two interpretations are possible for (10): (i) the painter has painted many pictures, and (ii) the painter possesses many pictures. Interpretation (i) becomes less likely when the product’s coming into existence does not greatly depend on the creativity of the producer. Consider the following:

- (11) *Blómaframleiðandinn á mörg blóm.*
 flower_producer:Def:NOM owns many flowers:ACC
 'The floriculturist has many flowers.'

Flowers are normally considered to be products of nature, and the only possible interpretation for (11) would be that the floriculturist possesses many flowers.

The following is another example of creative works, combined with a term indicating location:

- (12) *Tíu listamenn eiga verk á sýningunni, ...*
 ten artists:NOM own:3pl works:ACC on exhibition:Def:DAT
 'Ten artists have put their works on display at the exhibition, ...'
 (*Lesbók*, 3. August 1996: 8⁹)

It is not altogether impossible to use *hafa* 'have' or *vera með* 'be with' instead of *eiga* 'own' in (12), but *eiga* is by far more appropriate in the sentence.

4.2. Occupational status

This group contains terms which denote human categories in society, typically having a temporary relation to the possessor: e.g. *kennari* 'teacher', *nemandi* 'student, pupil', *læknir* 'doctor', *lögfræðingur* 'lawyer', *vinnumaður* 'farm laborer'. Only *hafa* 'have' is appropriate for use with these terms:

- (13) *Jón { hefur / ??er með / *á } lögfræðing.*
 John:NOM { has / ??is with / *owns } lawyer:ACC
 'John hired a lawyer.'

Terms of this group normally appear in the non-definite form in sentences involving the verb *hafa* 'have' as in (13), in which the verb indicates that the persons involved are related in terms appropriate to the occupation indicated by the term. If any of these terms appears in the definite form, the sentence indicates that the possessor is responsible for the possessee's being in a certain place. Compare the following sentences (cf. also (7) and (8)):

- (14) a. *Jón hefur nemendur í Þýskalandi.*
 John:NOM has pupils:ACC in Germany:DAT
 'John has pupils in Germany.'

⁹ *Lesbók*: *Lesbók Morgunblaðsins* ~ *menning/listir*, a Saturday supplement of the daily newspaper *Morgunblaðið*.

- b. *Jón hefur nemendurna sína í Þýskalandi.*
 John:NOM has pupils:Def:ACC his in Germany:DAT
 ‘John has his pupils (staying) in Germany.’
 (*sína* is the reflexive possessive pronoun)

The normal interpretation for (14a) would be that John is teaching in Germany, and (14b) indicates that John’s pupils are in Germany for a certain period of time, e.g. on a school trip, and that John is responsible for it.

Þræll ‘slave’ can be used with *eiga* ‘own’, but this indicates that it is treated as a thing rather than a person:

- (15) *Kóngurinn á marga þræla.*
 king:Def:NOM owns many slaves:ACC
 ‘The king has many slaves.’

Independent people normally cannot appear in the possessee position of the verb *vera með* ‘be with’, but if there is a relation such as employer and employee between the possessor and the possessee, and the latter is accompanying the former, *vera með* ‘be with’ is possible:

- (16) *Jón {er með / hefur} leiðsögumann í ferðinni.*
 John:NOM {is with / has} guide:ACC in trip:Def:DAT
 ‘John has a guide on the trip.’

In (16), *vera með* is as acceptable as *hafa*.

4.3. Terms pertaining to the body

Basically, only *vera með* ‘be with’ is fully acceptable, and *eiga* ‘own’ is altogether unacceptable for this group. This group can be divided into three subgroups according to the acceptability and the conditioning of the use of *hafa* ‘have’: (i) “body parts”, (ii) “illnesses” and (iii) “accessories and minor apparel”. It should be noted that “body parts” and “accessories and minor apparel” are included in this group only when they are not separated from the possessor’s body.

4.3.1. Body parts

Terms denoting a body part are commonly used with *vera með* ‘be with’, less commonly with *hafa* ‘have’. If the term denotes a body part which is normally

possessed inherently ('everyone'-type possession¹⁰), e.g. *höfuð* 'head', *andlit* 'face', *auga* 'eye', *nef* 'nose', *munur* 'mouth', *eyra* 'ear', *hár* 'hair', *hönd* 'hand', *fót* 'foot, leg', *magi* 'stomach', *rödd* 'voice', it usually requires some qualifier such as 'blue' in (17):¹¹

- (17) *Jón* { *er með / hefur* } *blá augu*.
 John:NOM { is with / has } blue eyes:ACC
 'John has blue eyes.'

In example (17), both *vera með* 'be with' and *hafa* 'have' are acceptable, and there seems to be no semantic difference between the two. However, *vera með* is more common and *hafa* sounds rather formal.

If the verb *eiga* 'own' is used for a body part, it is a dismembered body part of some other entity than the possessor in the sentence. Consider:

- (18) *Átt þú læri?*
 own:2sg you:NOM thighs:ACC
 'Do you have legs?'

Sentence (18) would be meaningful only in situations where *læri* refers to meat.

If a term denotes a body part which not all people possess ('not everyone'-type possession), the term can appear without any qualifier:

- (19) *Jón* { *er með / hefur* } *skegg*.
 John:NOM { is with / has } beard:ACC
 'John has a beard.'

Again, in (19) *vera með* 'be with' is more common.

However, in negative sentences where the possessor's lack of 'everyone'-type possession is indicated, the acceptability of *hafa* 'have' is higher than that of *vera með* 'be with':

- (20) a. *Skrimslið hefur engin augu*.
 monster:Def:NOM has no:ACC eyes:ACC
 'The monster has no eyes.'

¹⁰ The terms "'everyone'-type possession" and "'not everyone'-type possession" are Tsunoda's (1995: 617ff.).

¹¹ As Tsunoda (1995: 619) points out, addition of a qualifier turns an 'everyone'-type possessee into a 'not everyone'-type possessee, i.e. a possessee not all people possess, and this makes the sentence meaningful.

- b. *Skrímslið er ekki með augu.*
 monster:Def:NOM is not with eyes:ACC
 'The monster has no eyes.'

(20a) with *hafa* 'have' is more common than (20b) with *vera með* 'be with'.¹²
 Compare (20) with the following negative sentences corresponding to (19):

- (21) a. *Jón hefur ekkert skegg.*
 John:NOM has no beard:ACC
 'John has no beard.'
- b. *Jón er ekki með skegg.*
 John:NOM is not with beard:ACC
 'John has no beard.'

A sentence like (21b), with *vera með* 'be with' is more common than one like (21a), with *hafa* 'have'.

For *líkami* 'body', *hafa* 'have' is more common than *vera með* 'be with', in contrast to terms referring to specific body parts (cf. (17) and (19)):

- (22) *Jón { hefur / er með } hraustan líkama.*
 John:NOM { has / is with } healthy body:ACC
 'John has a sound body.'

In (22), both verbs are acceptable, but *hafa* 'have' is more common.

For terms of perception, e.g. *sjón* 'sight', *heyrn* 'hearing', *bragðskyn* 'sense of taste', *snertiskyn* 'sense of touch', *lyktarskyn* 'sense of smell', *hafa* 'have' is as acceptable as *vera með* 'be with':

¹² (20a) is an example of the combination of *hafa* 'have' and the indefinite pronoun *engin* 'no', and (20b) is that of *vera með* 'be with' and the adverb *ekki* 'not'. The other combinations are not entirely impossible:

- (i) *Skrímslið hefur ekki augu.*
 monster:Def:NOM has not eyes:ACC
 'The monster has no eyes.'
- (ii) *Skrímslið er með engin augu.*
 monster:Def:NOM is with no:ACC eyes:ACC
 'The monster has no eyes.'

They are, however, much less common than (20).

- (23) *Jón* { *hefur* / *er með* } *góða sjón*.
 John:NOM { has / is with } good sight:ACC
 'John has good sight.'

In (23), the acceptability of *hafa* 'have' and that of *vera með* 'be with' are almost the same, and preferences differ from speaker to speaker.

The following is an example in which the acceptability of *hafa* 'have' is higher than that of *vera með* 'be with':

- (24) *Söngvarinn* { *hefur* / *er með* } *vítt raddsvið*.
 singer:Def:NOM { has / is with } wide voice_range:ACC
 'The singer has a wide-ranging voice.'

In (24), *hafa* is much more common than *vera með*.

Although *hafa* 'have' is normally less acceptable for body part nouns, its acceptability improves when used in an idiomatic expression, in which the body part carries a certain figurative meaning:

- (25) *Jón* { *hefur* / *er með* } *bein í nefinu*.
 John:NOM { has / is with } bone:ACC in nose:Def:DAT
 'John is determined.' (literally: 'John has a bone in his nose.')

In (25), both *hafa* 'have' and *vera með* 'be with' are possible, but *hafa* is more common. It should be noted that many idioms like this might have been formed under foreign influence.¹³

The following are examples involving a body part, where only *hafa* 'have' is acceptable:

- (26) *Jón* *hefur auga fyrir málverkum*.
 John:NOM has eye:ACC for paintings:DAT
 'John has an eye for paintings.'¹⁴
- (27) *Jón* *hefur eyra fyrir tónlist*.
 John:NOM has ear:ACC for music:DAT
 'John has an ear for music.'

In (26) and (27), the verb *hafa* 'have' cannot be replaced with *vera með* 'be with' or *eiga* 'own'. These expressions might also have been modeled after a foreign language. Whatever the origin, however, it is true that many idioms involving a

¹³ Friðjónsson (1993: 41) states that the idiom *hafa bein í nefinu* 'be determined' is known from the first half of the twentieth century and has its origin in a foreign model.

¹⁴ The English equivalents in (26) and (27) are adapted from Tsunoda (1995: 609).

body part, in which the body part carries some special meaning, include the possessive verb *hafa* 'have'.

For this group, the acceptability of *hafa* 'have' probably correlates with the abstractness of meaning of the possessee.

4.3.2. Illnesses

This type involves terms which denote illnesses, which are normally not visible itself: e.g. *kvef* 'cold', *hiti* 'fever, temperature', *höfuðverkur* 'headache', *hálsbólga* 'sore throat', *hósti* 'cough', *sykursýki* 'diabetes', *niðurgangur* 'diarrhea', *ofnæmi* 'allergy'. For this group, only *vera með* 'be with' is fully acceptable, and the terms normally appear in the non-definite form:

- (28) *Jón* { *er með* / *??hefur* / **á* } *kvef*.
 John:NOM { is with / ??has / *owns } cold:ACC
 'John has a cold.'

Terms like *sár* 'wound' or *bóla* 'pimple' can be included in the group "body parts". They are clearly visible and *hafa* 'have' is acceptable, although *vera með* 'be with' is much more common:

- (29) *Jón* { *er með* / *hefur* } *sár* *á* *hendinni*.
 John:NOM { is with / has } wound:ACC on hand:Def:DAT
 'John has a wound on his hand.'

However, the acceptability of *hafa* 'have' for *bólga* 'swelling', which normally denotes a symptom of an internal disorder, is doubtful, even in cases where the symptom would seem to be visible on the body. Compare the following with (29):

- (30) *Jón* { *er með* / *hefur* } *bólgu* *á* *hendinni*.
 John:NOM { is with / ?has } swelling:ACC on hand:Def:DAT
 'John has a swelling on his hand.'

There would seem to be a correlation between the term's concreteness and the acceptability of *hafa* 'have'. This is apparently in opposition to the tendency observable for "body parts" where *hafa* becomes more acceptable when the terms bear figurative and/or abstract meanings. One possible account for this might be that the existence of idioms with *hafa* involving body part terms such as (25) - (27) facilitates the use of *hafa* even in cases where they do not bear any figurative meaning. "Illnesses", on the other hand, are purely corporal symptoms and rarely

construct expressions indicating one's nature or ability with *hafa* and, as a result, the acceptability of *hafa* is very low.¹⁵

In the written language, however, one can find examples of *hafa* 'have' with a term for an illness:

- (31) [A poor sick girl was lying on an old divan. She had been an asthmatic and had caught a cold . . .]

hún hafði líka slæman hósta.
 she:NOM had:3sg also bad cough:ACC
 'she had a bad cough, too.'

(*Kóngaliljur*: 13¹⁶)

In the spoken language, *vera með* 'be with' is also more common in a sentence like (31). *Hafa* 'have' leaves a rather formal impression.

4.3.3. Accessories and minor apparel

This group includes terms denoting accessories and minor apparel (i.e. items which cover only a small part of the body): e.g. *gleraugu* 'glasses', *eyrnalokkur* 'earring', *hálsfesti* 'necklace', *hringur* 'ring', *bindi* 'tie', *belti* 'belt', *hanski* 'glove', *hattur* 'hat', *húfa* 'cap', *trefill* 'scarf', *úr* 'watch'. When one is wearing them, the situation can be described by *vera með* 'be with', but not by *hafa* 'have'. Consider:

- (32) a. *Jón er með gleraugu.*
 John:NOM is with glasses:ACC
 'John wears glasses. / John has glasses.'
- b. *Jón hefur gleraugu.*
 John:NOM has glasses:ACC
 'John has glasses.'

(32a) indicates that John wears glasses or has them close at hand, and (32b) denotes that John keeps glasses somewhere. When John has a pair of glasses in his hand, the situation can be described by either (32a) or (32b), but when he is wearing them, only (32a) is appropriate. The definite form can be used for this group, although rare, when the item has been mentioned in the preceding context.

¹⁵ This account was prompted by a comment of Einar Sigmarsson about the acceptability of *hafa* 'have' for body part terms.

¹⁶ *Kóngaliljur*, a short story by Ásta Sigurðardóttir, in *Kóngaliljur: smásögur 1960-1985*. Mál og menning, Reykjavík, 1987.

Eiga 'own' is inappropriate for describing a situation where one is wearing something.

The expression *vera í* +DAT 'be in something' is used when one is wearing footwear or clothes which cover a relatively large part of the body, e.g. *skyrti* 'shirt', *jakki* 'jacket', *úlpa* 'windbreaker', *sundföt* 'bathing suit', *peysa* 'sweater', *buxur* 'trousers', *pils* 'skirt', *skór* 'shoes', *stígvél* 'boot':

- (33) *Jón er í peysu.*
 John:NOM is in sweater:DAT
 'John is wearing a sweater.' (literally: 'John is in a sweater.')

4.4. Other possesseees

For this group, *eiga* 'own' can be used and the relation between the possessor and the possessee indicated thereby is that of "owner" and "possession" in the usual sense. When *hafa* 'have' is used for this group, it indicates that the possessor keeps the possessee somewhere. When *vera með* 'be with' is used, it indicates that one has something with the intention of putting it to use. In many cases, the semantic difference between *hafa* and *vera með* seems to be very small. The group can be divided into two subgroups according to the acceptability of *vera með* 'be with' without a term indicating location: (i) "portable possesseees", and (ii) "non-portable possesseees". The possessee can appear in the definite form for each verb, when the item can be specified by the preceding context or by the situation of the utterance.

4.4.1. Portable possesseees

This group includes terms denoting small things which one can easily carry: e.g. *penni* 'pen', *bók* 'book', *hnífur* 'knife', *taska* 'suitcase, bag', *farsími* 'cellular phone'. Terms in "accessories and minor apparel" belong to this group when one is not wearing them.

Eiga 'own' is used to indicate ownership:

- (34) *Jón á marga hnífa.*
 John:NOM owns many knives:ACC
 'John has many knives.'

(34) indicates that John owns many knives but does not imply anything about where he keeps them. However, in a sentence involving a term indicating a location very close to the possessor's body, *eiga* 'own' is inappropriate:

- (35) *Jón* { *er með / hefur / *á* } *hníf* *í hendinni*.
 John:NOM { is with / has / *owns } knife:ACC in hand:Def:DAT
 'John has a knife in his hand.'

In (35), both *vera með* 'be with' and *hafa* 'have' are fully acceptable. It is irrelevant whether the knife is in John's possession or not. Sentences containing either verb describe John's having a knife in his hand and the semantic difference seems to be very small. However, it would be more appropriate to use *vera með* 'be with' in describing a situation where John is about to attack some other person with a knife, and *hafa* 'have' would be more appropriate if John is merely holding a knife in his hand. In a sentence involving *vera með* 'be with', a term indicating location is optional, but for *hafa* 'have', it is usually required, when lacking support of the context.

In a sentence involving *á sér* 'on oneself' which indicate the surface of the possessor's body (e.g. in the possessor's pocket), *vera með* 'be with' is more common than *hafa* 'have':

- (36) *Jón* { *er með / hefur* } *hníf* *á sér*.
 John:NOM { is with / has } knife:ACC on himself:DAT
 'John has a knife on him.' (*sér* is the reflexive pronoun)

In (36), *hafa* is acceptable, but *vera með* is much more common.

Vera með 'be with' can be used for possessee which one cannot normally carry by hand, but can lead, e.g. *hestur* 'horse', *hundur* 'dog':

- (37) *Jón* *er með hest*.
 John:NOM is with horse:ACC
 'John is leading a horse.'

When John is riding a horse, (37) is inappropriate, but the situation can be described by a sentence like the following:

- (38) *Jón* *er á hesti*.
 John:NOM is on horse:DAT
 'John is riding a horse.' (literally: 'John is on a horse.')

4.4.2. Non-portable possesseees

For possesseees which one cannot normally carry by hand nor can lead, *vera með* 'be with' is inappropriate without a place indication:

- (39) ??*Jón er með bíl.*
 John:ACC is with car:ACC
 (intended meaning:) ‘John has a car close at hand.’

(39) would be meaningful only if the car is a toy car. ‘Car’ can be used in a sentence involving *hafa* ‘have’ or *vera með* ‘be with’ when combined with a place indication or some adverbial element:

- (40) *Jón { hefur / er með } bíl til umráða.*
 John:NOM { has / is with } car:ACC for disposal:GEN
 ‘John has a car at his disposal.’

In (40), both *hafa* ‘have’ and *vera með* ‘be with’ are acceptable, but *hafa* is more common. It is irrelevant whether the car is in John’s possession or not. There seems to be no semantic difference between the two. However, there are cases where the same semantic differences as those stated for (35) are maintained:

- (41) {*Ert þú með / Hefur þú* } *bíl í bílskúrnunum?*
 {are:2sg you:NOM with / have:2sg you:NOM} car:ACC in garage:Def:DAT
 ‘Is there a car in your garage?’

In (41), *vera með* ‘be with’ would be more appropriate when implying that the speaker wants to ask the hearer to drive him/her home (i.e. to ask whether the hearer is ready to go with a car), and *hafa* ‘have’ would be more appropriate when just asking whether the hearer is storing a car in the garage or not.

Eiga ‘own’ only indicates ownership:

- (42) *Jón á bíl.*
 John:NOM owns car:ACC
 ‘John has a car.’

Terms like *sími* ‘telephone’ (not a cellular phone) or *myndsendi* ‘fax’ can be used in a sentence involving *vera með* ‘be with’ or *hafa* ‘have’ without a term indicating location, even though they are usually not considered to be portable items. Both verbs merely indicate that the telephone is available for use (i.e. at one’s home or office, etc.):

- (43) *Jón { er með / hefur } síma.*
 John:NOM { is with / has } telephone:ACC
 ‘John has a telephone.’

In (43), both *vera með* ‘be with’ and *hafa* ‘have’ are acceptable, but *vera með* is more common. It is irrelevant to (43) where John is at the moment of the

utterance. If *eiga* 'own' is used with *sími* 'telephone', it indicates ownership of the telephone.

Terms denoting real estate, e.g. *land* 'land', *bær* 'farm', *hús* 'house', are commonly used in sentences involving *eiga* 'own'. The addition of a locative phrase is optional:

- (44) *Jón á land í Þýskalandi.*
 John:NOM owns land:ACC in Germany:DAT
 'John has a piece of land in Germany.'

For sentences dealing with the renting of real estate, *vera með* 'be with' and *hafa* 'be with' can both be used:

- (45) *Jón {er með / hefur} herbergi á stúdentagarðinum.*
 John:NOM {is with / has} room:ACC on dormitory:Def:DAT
 'John has a room in the dormitory.'

There seems to be no semantic difference between *vera með* and *hafa* in (45), and *vera með* is as acceptable as *hafa*.

4.5. A further note on *vera með* 'be with'

The verb *vera með* 'be with' combined with an accusative possessee does not merely denote a spatial relation between the possessor and the possessee. This is shown by the fact that the possessee can also appear in the dative case, depending on the type of the possessor and/or the possessee.

If the possessor is [+animate] and the possessee is [-animate], the possessee normally appears in the accusative, as shown in the above examples. If the possessee is [+animate], especially [+human], the case of the possessee correlates with the degree of control which the possessor exerts on the possessee. Consider:

- (46) a. *Jón er með barnið sitt.*
 John:NOM is with child:Def:ACC his:ACC
 'John is with his child.' (*sitt* is the reflexive possessive pronoun)
- b. *Jón er með barninu sínu.*
 John:NOM is with child:Def:DAT his:DAT
 'John is together with his child.'

Sentence (46a) describes a situation where the child is a baby and John is holding it in his arms or it is in a baby carriage, or he is leading his own child by the hand. In contrast, (46b) denotes that the child can act of his/her own free will and is merely accompanying John.

A human noun can appear in the accusative after the verb *vera með* ‘be with’, if there is a relation like that of employer and employee between the possessor and the possessee, in which the latter is subject to the former. Compare the following sentences:

- (47) *Jón er með {?leiðsögumanni / leiðsögunum} í ferðinni.* (cf. 16)
 John:NOM is with {?guide:DAT / guide:ACC } in trip:Def:DAT
 ‘John has a guide on the trip.’

- (48) *Nemendurnir eru með {kennurum / *kennara} í ferðinni.*
 pupils:Def:NOM are with { teachers:DAT/ *teachers:ACC } in trip:Def:DAT
 ‘The pupils are accompanied by teachers on the trip.’

If ‘guide’ appears in the dative in (47), the sentence indicates that John is on the trip together with his friend who is a guide, or some similar situation, i.e. the guide is of the same status as John. In (48), the accusative is not acceptable, because it is the teachers who decide what to do.

As the degree of the possessor’s animacy declines, the dative case is more frequently used for the possessee, as illustrated in Gustavs (1982: 137-139). Gustavs (1982: 122) makes the following statement:

“*Með* (Akk[usativ].) steht deshalb hauptsächlich bei Bezugswörtern (Subjekten) mit den semantischen Merkmalen /+belebt/ und /+aktiv/: **Mensch** (in den mit Abstand häufigsten Fällen), (**menschliche**) **Institution/Organisation**, **Tier**, **Pflanze**, **Fahrzeug**. Alle übrigen Bezugswörter (Subjekte) haben den Akkusativ bei *með* nur in dem Maße, wie sie in Haupt- und Nebenteile gegliederte Größen bezeichnen, wobei *með* (Akk.) einen oder mehrere der deutlich vom “Hauptteil” abgegrenzten (und doch als zu ihm gehörig empfundenen) (Bestand)Teile einführt. *Með* (Dat[iv].) läßt die genannte Teil-von-Beziehung weniger deutlich werden.” [boldface in original]

In a sentence involving *vera með* ‘be with’ which describes a part-whole relation of a non-animate and non-active entity, the nominal, denoting a “part” (the possessee), can appear in either the accusative or the dative case, seemingly with no change in meaning:

- (49) a. *Bærinn var með torfbaki og litlum gluggum.*
 farmhouse:Def:NOM was with turf_roof:DAT and little windows:DAT
 ‘The farmhouse had a sod thatched roof and little windows.’
 (adapted from *Blómin á þakinu*¹⁷)
- b. *Bærinn var með torfbak og litla glugga.*
 farmhouse:Def:NOM was with turf_roof:ACC and little windows:ACC
 ‘The farmhouse had a sod thatched roof and little windows.’

Both (49a) and (49b) are fully acceptable, although the dative in (49a) is the original and probably more frequent version. For detailed descriptions of this case fluctuation and the usage of the preposition *með* ‘with’ in general, see Gustavs (1982), Kress (1982: 205-207) and Friðjónsson (1988: 61-63). Note that the preposition *með* (+DAT) has a much wider semantic range than described here.

5. Conclusion

The usage of each verb can be summarized as follows:

1. *Eiga* ‘own’ can denote any of the following: (i) that the possessor has inherent or lasting human relationship to the possessee which is indicated by a kinship term or by a term indicating a personal relation as seen from the possessor’s point of view, (ii) that the possessee is a creation of the possessor, or (iii) the possessor’s ownership of the possessee.
2. *Hafa* ‘have’ can be used to denote (i) the possessor’s temporary social relationship to the possessee, or (ii) that the possessor keeps the possessee somewhere. *Hafa* can also be used for terms pertaining to the body under certain conditions.
3. *Vera með* (+ACC) ‘be with’ can be used if one or both of the following two conditions are satisfied: (i) that the possessee is seen to be in unity with the possessor’s body, and (ii) that the possessee is under the control of the possessor.

Note that these statements are valid only for cases with a human possessor and a concrete noun possessee. Further investigation is required to determine the conditions under which the verbs operate in other cases.

¹⁷ *Blómin á þakinu*, a short story by Ingibjörg Sigurðardóttir. Mál og menning, Reykjavík, 1985.

Abbreviations

ACC:	Accusative	pl:	Plural
DAT:	Dative	sg:	Singular
Def:	Definite	1:	First person
GEN:	Genitive	2:	Second person
NOM:	Nominative	3:	Third person

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現代アイスランド語の所有の動詞

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キーワード：現代アイスランド語、所有の動詞、親族名称、身体部分

現代アイスランド語の所有関係を表わす動詞のうち、*eiga* ‘own’, *hafa* ‘have’,
vera með ‘be with’ の3つを扱った。「所有者」と「所有物」との間の意味的関
係のあり方ないし捉えられ方の違いが、述語動詞の選択と相関することに注目し
て「所有物」を分類し、その分類に従って各々の動詞の用法を記述した。

(いりえ・こうじ 博士課程)